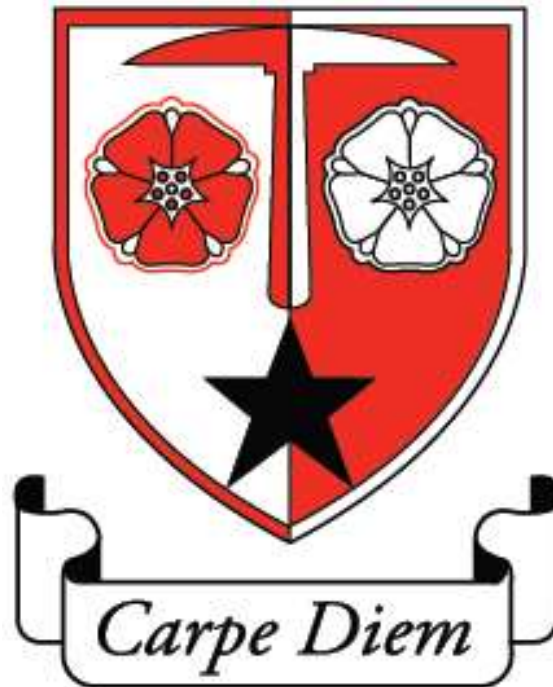


Audenshaw School



CODE OF CONDUCT

This policy is reviewed every two years by the Personnel Committee.

History of Document

Issue No	Author/Owner	Date Written	Approved by Personnel	Received by Governors	Comments
Draft	Jeanette Saw	11/10/2013			
Issue 1	Jeanette Saw	15/11/2013	15/11/2013	15/11/2013	
Issue 1.1	Jeanette Saw	16/06/2014	16/06/2014	16/06/2014	Change to named individuals
Issue 1.2	Jeanette Saw	11/11/2015	18/11/2015	18/11/2015	Minor amends
Issue 1.3	Jeanette Saw	15/07/2016	28/07/2016	28/07/2016	Minor amends
Issue 1.4	Deborah Patel	10/07/2018	16/07/2018	16/07/2018	Minor amendments
Issue 1.5	Jeanette Saw	24/06/2019	08/08/2019	08/08/2019	Minor amendments
Issue 1.6	Deborah Patel	07/07/2020	10/08/2020	10/08/2020	Minor amendments
Issue 1.7	Deborah Patel	15/07/2021	26/07/2021	26/07/2021	Minor amendments
Issue 1.8	K Breakell	06.03.2022	24/03/2022	24/03/2022	Inclusion of lowlevel concerns as per KCSIE 2021
Issue 1.9	K Breakell	03/05/2022	03/05/2022	03/05/2022	Inclusion of reference to paragraph 85 of KCSIE 2021

OUR MISSION

Our school aims to provide a quality education in a caring community based on values of respect, responsibility and resilience and a relentless pursuit of excellence in all that we do.

OUR VISION

Our School will be recognised as a fully inclusive, aspirational, high achieving centre of excellence, firmly rooted in the local community.

We will create, develop and maintain a challenging and stimulating personalised learning environment where no student is overlooked or left behind and where teaching and learning is high quality, inspirational and innovative.

We will consistently have high academic standards and expectations for every individual and continue to place considerable value on sport and healthy living and developing strong links with the community.

All members of our school community will be valued and every success will be celebrated.

Our School will maintain a safe, secure and caring environment in which to work and learn.

AUDENSHAW SCHOOL SAFEGUARDING STATEMENT

This School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment.

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PART A – CODE OF CONDUCT FOR EMPLOYEES

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1. Introduction

- 1.1 Audenshaw School's Code of Conduct policy sets out to maintain the principle that employees who work at Audenshaw School will form role models for all stakeholders with whom they come into contact. As such, this policy forms part of a whole-school approach to good behaviour and discipline which aims to promote the good behaviour necessary for effective learning to take place.

2. Definitions

- 2.1 In general terms, the School expects that the conduct of its employees is such that no justifiable complaint can be made by members of the public, other bodies and agencies, other employees, managers or governors. Any complaints about inappropriate conduct will be dealt with fairly and reasonably using the School's agreed procedures.
- 2.2 All employees are expected to obey the law relating to their work and general conduct. If employees break the law outside of working time and the offence is one that could damage public confidence or have a direct effect on their work and/or the reputation of the School, they may be subject to disciplinary procedures.

3. Policy Statement

- 3.1 As per paragraph 85 (Keeping Children Safe in Education 2021). This policy is in place in order to ensure appropriate action is taken in a timely manner to safeguard and promote children's welfare. This policy includes guidance on staff/pupil relationships (Section 7). This policy also signposts staff to the 'acceptable usage policy' (Part B) which outlines guidance relating to mobile phones and social media.
- 3.2 This policy and procedure defines the expected conduct of all employees engaged at the school whether in paid or voluntary employment.
- 3.3 The School, as employer, has a right to require high standards of conduct and loyalty. In the delivery of services, behaviour of employees should, at all times, be to the highest standard that the public is entitled to expect.
- 3.4 Employees are also expected to behave in a fair, courteous and supportive manner to colleagues within the school, and to operate within the School's employment policies.
- 3.5 The School has values by which we operate and which underpin, in the broadest sense, what the employees and the public can expect in terms of delivery of services, standards and styles of management. These values are:
- Respect
 - Resilience
 - Responsibility

- 3.6 This Code of Conduct reflects those values and provides you with information about the rules and standards expected of you.
- 3.7 Breaches of the Code of Conduct will normally result in disciplinary action being taken. Serious breaches may result in dismissal from the School's employment. *The Code of Conduct does not cover every eventuality. If you are unclear about what would be considered unacceptable behaviour, you must consult your Curriculum Leader or a member of the Senior Leadership Team (SLT). Some service areas may have specific protocols that supplement this Code of Conduct. Where appropriate, your line manager will provide you with this information at your induction.*
- 3.8 Employees may be accompanied at a Disciplinary Hearing resulting from an alleged breach of the Code by a trade union representative or work colleague, not involved in any part of the process.
- 3.9 In addition, teachers are also expected to adhere to the 2013 Teacher Standards. The Standards set a clear baseline of expectations for the professional practice and conduct of teachers, from the point of qualification.

4. Equal Opportunities statement

- 4.1 Audenshaw School is committed to equality of opportunity and to promoting an ethos of dignity, courtesy and respect throughout the organisation.

5. Objectives

- 5.1 To enable all employees to know and understand what is deemed acceptable;
- 5.2 To help employees to work with students, parents and other employees to create an environment free from physical, verbal or non-verbal abuse;
- 5.3 To ensure that all students and employees have the opportunity to achieve their potential;
- 5.4 To ensure that every student and employee is helped to develop a sense of personal and cultural identity that is confident and open to change, and that is receptive and respectful towards other identities.

6. Low Level Concerns

Keeping Children Safe in Education September 2021 states the following:

As part of their whole school approach to safeguarding, schools and colleges should ensure that they promote an open and transparent culture in which all concerns about all adults working in or on behalf of the school or college (including supply teachers, volunteers and contractors) are dealt with promptly and appropriately.

Creating a culture in which all concerns about adults (including allegations that do not meet the harms threshold (see Part Four - Section one)) are shared responsibly and with the right person, recorded and dealt with appropriately, is

critical. If implemented correctly, this should encourage an open and transparent culture; enable schools and colleges to identify concerning, problematic or inappropriate behaviour early; minimise the risk of abuse; and ensure that adults working in or on behalf of the school or college are clear about professional boundaries and act within these boundaries, and in accordance with the ethos and values of the institution.

What is a low level concern?

The term 'low-level' concern does not mean that it is insignificant, it means that the behaviour towards a child does not meet the threshold set out at paragraph 338 of KCSIE

A low-level concern is any concern – no matter how small, and even if no more than causing a sense of unease or a 'nagging doubt' - that an adult working in or on behalf of the school or college may have acted in a way that:

- a) is inconsistent with the staff code of conduct, including inappropriate conduct outside of work; and
- b) does not meet the allegations threshold or is otherwise not considered serious enough to consider a referral to the LADO.

Such behaviour can exist on a wide spectrum, from the inadvertent or thoughtless, or behaviour that may look to be inappropriate, but might not be in specific circumstances, through to that which is ultimately intended to enable abuse.

It is crucial that any such concerns, including those which do not meet the harm threshold are shared responsibly and with the right person, and recorded and dealt with appropriately. Ensuring they are dealt with effectively should also protect those working in or on behalf of schools and colleges from potential false allegations or misunderstandings.

A member of staff who has a concern about another member of staff should inform the Principal about their concern.

Storing and use of Low-Level Concerns and follow-up information.

LLC forms and follow-up information will be stored securely within the schools safeguarding systems, with access only by the leadership team. This will be stored in accordance with the school's GDPR and data protection policies. The staff member(s) reporting the concern must keep the information confidential and not share the concern with others apart from the Principal or those aware in the senior leadership team.

Low-Level Concerns will not be referred to in references unless they have been formalised into more significant concerns resulting in disciplinary or misconduct procedure.

Whenever staff leave the School, any record of low-level concerns which are stored about them will be reviewed as to whether or not that information needs to be kept. Consideration will be given to: (a) whether some or all of the information contained within any record may have any reasonably likely value in terms of any potential historic employment or abuse claim so as to justify keeping it, in line with normal safeguarding records practice; or (b) if, on

balance, any record is not considered to have any reasonably likely value, still less actionable concern, and ought to be deleted accordingly

7. Relationships with students

7.1 Employees have a duty to safeguard students from:

- Physical abuse
- Sexual abuse
- Emotional abuse
- Neglect

Employees must show commitment to safeguarding and an on-going culture of vigilance.

This duty to safeguard students includes the duty to report concerns about students to the Child Protection Officer or a Deputy Child Protection Officer – These roles are undertaken by:

Child Protection Officer: Kelly Breakell – Vice Principal (Personal Development & Support)

Deputy Child Protection Officer: Jimmy Watt – Assistant Principal (Behaviour and Attitudes)

Deputy Child Protection Officer: Elizabeth Warner – Assistant Principal
((Access and Inclusion – Vulnerable Learners and In-Year Transfers))

8. Standard of Dress

8.1 It is expected that employees will dress in a way that clearly reflects and is reciprocal of the standards of Audenshaw School within its community. All employees must have regard for health, safety and welfare and need to convey a sense of formality, authority and purpose.

8.2 All students are expected to dress to a high standard at all times and the same is therefore expected of employees. The School requires its employees to dress in a manner that creates a good impression and respects differing cultures. Clothes should provide sufficient cover so as not to be offensive.

8.3 Work wear for employees should be that which would be acceptable within a professional office environment and to have due regard to a standard of dress appropriate to deliver learning and teaching to young impressionable individuals. It is therefore expected that male employees will wear a jacket, trousers and tie and that female employees will wear a suit, jacket/trousers/skirt, dress/jacket. A jacket is to be worn in the corridors unless the Principal deems this to be unacceptable due to weather conditions. Jeans and t-shirts are not acceptable as work wear. Footwear should be appropriate to a busy environment - trainers are not acceptable for every day wear apart from those delivering Physical Education. Open toe footwear such as flip flops are not deemed suitable on health and safety grounds.

8.4 Body piercing is strongly discouraged, apart from earrings in each ear, and employees are expected to conform to this convention while at the School or on school business. Any tattoos should be hidden from view while employees are working at the school, nor should employees have extreme hairstyles.

8.5 Employees must wear their ID badges at all times.

9. Use of Equipment

9.1 Computers – all teachers and a number of other employees will be issued with a laptop and passwords to access the internet. Employees are responsible for the use of the laptop while in their possession and should not give out their password. A laptop agreement must be signed by the employee.

9.2 Mobile Phones - Employees should not use their mobile phones during lessons and should not make or receive calls at any time that they are supervising students, unless in an emergency situation. A mobile phone agreement must be signed by the employee.

9.3 Other equipment - Any items belonging to the School must remain available to be used by employees and students as necessary. Employees will be responsible for the safe keeping of equipment loaned to them by the School.

9.4 Permission of the Principal should be requested if equipment other than the laptop/mobile phone issued by the School is to be taken home.

10. Time Keeping and Attendance

10.1 Punctuality is the key to running a successful educational establishment and students and employees are expected to attend all lessons on time and to remain on-site throughout a normal working day. Employees should be ready to receive students at the scheduled start time for sessions as well as making sure students are not dismissed before the appropriate end of session time.

10.2 Hours of attendance are detailed within the contract of employment. Repeated lateness may result in disciplinary proceedings. Repeated non-attendance will be dealt with in accordance with the School's Attendance Policy.

11. Honesty and Integrity

All employees must –

11.1 Maintain high standards of honesty and integrity in their work. This includes the handling and claiming of money, following correct procedures in all financial matters and the use of School property and facilities (Please refer to the Financial Handbook).

- 11.2 Fill in any document, form or record in an honest way and never damage, alter or falsify them. You should never conceal any matter that you know you should report.
- 11.3 Ensure in the course of your professional duties that money, property and other funds belonging to either the School or to others are properly used and protected from misappropriation.
- 11.4 Report to the Principal if you suspect any financial irregularities have occurred and to co-operate fully with any subsequent investigations.
- 11.5 Ensure that you conduct yourself in a manner which does not discredit yourself or the School or which might compromise the mutual trust and confidence that exists between the two.
- 11.6 Ensure that you do not use your official position or information acquired in the course of your duties to further your private interests or those of others.
- 11.7 Serve the School faithfully in the performance of your duties and not act unreasonably against the interests of the School.
- 11.8 Treat information gained through the performance of your duties with appropriate confidentiality and record that information in accordance with data protection legislation.
- 11.9 Ensure that all communications from the media regarding school business which may be received by you are directed to the Principal or one of the Vice Principals.

12. Working with your Manager

- 12.1 It is important to keep a good working relationship with your manager. As part of this, your manager will use the School's Performance Management Review scheme to appraise your performance and provide feedback, with advice on how to improve, define what is expected of you and deal with any concerns you may have about your work. Your manager should also advise you of the School's employment policies where they affect you and provide access to appropriate training and career development within the context of budget and service delivery needs. Your manager should also deal with you courteously, reasonably and fairly at all times. Your manager will support you in the proper performance of your duties, including assistance, where necessary, in dealing with other employees or members of the public.

You should carry out your duties, as agreed with your line manager and determined in your job description or commensurate to your job role and grade, conscientiously, safely and in line with school policies and procedures.

- 12.2 You should also comply with reasonable management requests and perform the full range of duties required in relation to your job to the required standard.
- 12.3 All dealings with managers should involve the same emphasis on honesty as with the public or colleagues.

13 Working with other Employees, Students, Parents/Carers and Members of the Public.

- 13.1 You should show respect for your colleagues and should not disrupt or hinder their work in any way.
- 13.2 You should deal with people impartially and professionally and treat others with respect and courtesy.
- 13.3 All forms of bullying, including violence or verbal aggression towards other individuals is unacceptable and will be dealt with seriously by the School. It is not acceptable for you to abuse your position with the School to take advantage of others. If there are important issues that you cannot resolve amicably, you must make the situation known to your manager.
- 13.4 All forms of harassment, including racial and sexual harassment, harassment on the grounds of race, religion, gender including pregnancy, sexual orientation, class, marital status, age, disability or political affiliations are unacceptable. Remember that it is the person who is harassed, rather than the person who is alleged to be harassing, who defines harassment. If your behaviour is beyond the behaviour of a reasonable person, or if the person concerned tells you that it is unwelcome, you must stop immediately. Failure to do so will be dealt with seriously by the School.
- 13.5 In all your contact with others, you should comply with the school's Equality Policy.

14. Conduct Outside Work

- 14.1 Whilst employees are entitled to private lives after hours, conduct outside of work must be considered. Employees must not engage in conduct outside work which could damage the reputation and standing of the School or the employee's own reputation or the reputation of other members of the School community.
- 14.2 Employees should be careful to ensure that nothing they say or do brings the School's name into disrepute. Offensive comments that are defamatory, discriminatory or false, stated in our communities or on social networking sites can damage a reputation that has taken a considerable amount of time to establish.
- 14.3 Criminal offences that involve violence, possession or misuse of drugs or sexual misconduct will be regarded as unacceptable and may constitute gross misconduct.
- 14.4 Employees subject to a criminal conviction, caution, reprimand, warning or bind over during their employment including from conditional offer must immediately report this to the Principal.
- 14.5 Employees may have a duty to disclose issues, whether personal or professional, which may give rise to Safeguarding concerns. This includes, but is not limited to, convictions of people with whom the employee has a relationship.

15. Confidentiality

- 15.1 Where employees have access to confidential information about students or their parents or carers, employees must not reveal such information except to those colleagues who have a professional role in relation to the student.
- 15.2 All employees are likely at some point to witness actions which need to be confidential. For example, where a student is bullied by another student (or employee), this needs to be reported and dealt with in accordance with the appropriate procedures. Such matters must not be discussed outside the School, including with the student's parent or carer, nor with colleagues from the School.
- 15.3 Employees have an obligation to share with their manager or the School's Child Protection Officer any information which gives rise to concern about the safety and welfare of a student. (See Child Protection and Safeguarding policies). Employees must be careful never to promise to a student that they will not act on information.
- 15.4 Employees should seek guidance from the Principal on any request to release student information to outside agencies to ensure we do not breach the General Data Protection Regulations.

16. Alcohol, Smoking and Drugs

- 16.1 Alcohol may not be consumed during working hours unless as part of a social event organised by the school. You should ensure that any alcohol which you consumed whilst off duty but during your normal working day will not damage the reputation of the school. For certain types of work, for example those which involve operating heavy machinery or driving school vehicles, it is not acceptable to consume any alcohol during your working day.
- 16.2 The School operates a no smoking policy. Employees are not permitted to smoke on the school premises or grounds including in stationary vehicles. This applies to all School buildings and those where School services are provided. (Please refer to the Smoke Free Policy for further details).
- 16.3 Employees must be conscious of the School's drug policy when discussing such issues, particularly the use of illegal substances, with students. It is expected that employees will attend for work in a fit state to carry out their duties - employees found under the influence of drugs or alcohol will be deemed to be unfit and disciplinary action may follow.

17. Use of Cars

- 17.1 Employee registration numbers are held on the database and it is important that employees inform the HR department if their number changes. For their own protection, employees should never give lifts to students without clearing

it with a senior member of staff. Employees must, in addition, check that their insurance covers them taking a student in their car.

- 17.2 All employees who are attending courses or meetings on behalf of the School or as part of their professional development must ensure that they have the appropriate insurance in place.

18. Communications with other staff

- 18.1 All employees are entitled to feel safe and secure at work and be free from intimidation or bullying behaviour. Employees are therefore expected to show professional courtesy and respect at all times to others working within the school.
- 18.2 Should an employee feel that the above guideline has not been followed they should raise the matter with their line manager or in the case where this involves the line manager with the employee senior to them.

19. Working Safely

- 19.1 The School and its employees have responsibilities for ensuring that a healthy and safe working environment is maintained.
- 19.2 Actions or omissions of any individual that place others in danger may lead to serious disciplinary action. Please refer to the school Health & Safety at Work Policy.

20. Parental Contacts

- 20.1 The School has an expectation that employees will act swiftly and professionally at all times. This is particularly important where parents have contacted the School with a concern or complaint relating to the education of their child. The aim at the School is to make a return call on the same day as the original contact was made, even if in the first instance this is just a holding call.
- 20.2 Where an error has been made we should look to apologise and correct the mistake as soon as possible. Investigations should be carried out promptly and effectively with parents informed of the outcome as soon as is practical. Where an on-going investigation may take some time, due to a student or an employee being absent for example, parents should be informed and given a date by which the investigation will be completed.
- 20.3 Where an employee receives a parent complaint they must refer this on in accordance with the School's Complaints Policy.

21. How to Report Concerns

- 21.1 Employees must show commitment to safeguarding and an on-going culture of vigilance.

- 21.2 An infringement of the standards must be properly investigated and managed confidentially.
- 21.3 Employees who suspect misconduct by a member of staff must immediately report this to the Principal or in their absence a member of SLT.

22 Breaches of the Code of Conduct

- 22.1 The School's Disciplinary Policy shall be applied to this policy up to and including dismissal.
- 22.2 All employees should report to their line manager or an appropriate senior manager any breaches or suspected breaches of this policy.

23 Links with other Policies

- 23.1 The Board of Governors is committed to good behaviour, standards and discipline. To help achieve this objective there is a clear network of systems and procedures in place for the prevention and investigation of misconduct. This Code of Conduct should be read in conjunction with the following School policies:

- Confidential Reporting Policy
- Attendance Policy
- ICT Acceptable Use Policy
- Disciplinary Policy
- Equality Statement
- Safer Recruitment Policy
- Financial Handbook
- Health & Safety Manual includes No Smoking Policy
- Grievance Policy

PART B – CODE OF CONDUCT FOR EMPLOYEES WORKING WITH YOUNG PEOPLE CONTENTS

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1. Introduction

For the purpose of this Policy, the “School” is defined as employees, governors, students and third parties such as contractors, agency workers and consultants acting on behalf of the organisation.

Audenshaw School is committed to ensuring that all employees whether permanent, temporary, volunteers and those undertaking work experience, successfully contribute a valuable and positive learning experience for our students. To achieve this, the School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all our students and expects all employees and volunteers to share in this ethos.

A relationship of trust exists where an employee or volunteer is in a position of power or influence over a student by virtue of the work or nature of the activity being undertaken. All employees should ensure that their relationships with students are appropriate to the age and gender of the students and take care that their language or conduct does not give rise to comment or speculation. Attitudes, demeanour and language all require care and thought, particularly when employees are dealing with adolescent boys and girls.

Education professionals recognise that they may sometimes be the victims of false or malicious allegations of child abuse by students or their parents/carers. While this is not a new concern and teachers have long been vulnerable to this kind of allegation, those within the education sector have generally adopted a professional, common sense approach in order to minimise this vulnerability in their day to day dealings with young people. Changes in patterns of allegation and a heightened concern among teachers and support staff have highlighted the need for an appropriate Code of Conduct. This is intended to help employees reduce further the risk of any vulnerability to false or malicious allegations, misconduct or abuse towards students with whom they work. Employees will understand and appreciate that a Code of Conduct cannot cover all eventualities and will not totally remove the risk of false or malicious allegations.

All allegations of child abuse must be taken seriously. It is essential that any allegation of abuse made against an employee or volunteer in an education setting is dealt with fairly, quickly and consistently and in a way that provides effective protection for the child while at the same time supporting the person who is the subject of the allegation. Under Child Protection procedures, an investigation may involve Police and the Services for Children and Young People. It may be necessary to suspend the employee concerned pending the outcome of the investigation with all the inevitable consequences in terms of public perception, publicity and feelings of helplessness and isolation. The school recognises that this will be a difficult and distressing experience especially if the allegations are shown to be without foundation.

The framework for managing cases of allegations of abuse against people who work with children is set out in ***DfE Keeping children safe in education (September 2021)***.

All employees should clearly understand the need to maintain appropriate boundaries in their dealings with students. Intimate or sexual relationships between an employee and student will be regarded as a grave breach of trust. Any sexual activity between an employee and a student, or young person, under 18 years of age may be a criminal offence. The offence of “abuse of a position of trust” which was originally set out in the Sexual Offences (Amendment) Act 2000 has been re-enacted by the Sexual Offences Act 2003 and extends the abuse of the position of trust offences to include additional occupations where the provision of the Act applies.

It is hoped that employees will be reassured by the advice contained in this Code. It will, in many cases, confirm good professional practice. However, heightened awareness of abuse on the part of parents/carers and students and a high media profile given to child abuse cases make it advisable for all employees to re-examine their approaches to individual students and their teaching styles to ensure that these do not give any grounds for doubt or suspicion on the part of colleagues, parents or students.

The Code of Conduct does not replace the School’s Child Protection Policy or Safeguarding Policy.

2. General

Employees should take care that their relationships with students reflect the age, gender and maturity of the students. It will be particularly important to ensure that all aspects of demeanour, language and attitudes, however conveyed, do not give rise to misunderstandings, especially when dealing with adolescent boys and girls. Ambiguous or ambivalent comment and conduct, in particular, should be avoided.

3. Physical contact

Physical contact may be misconstrued by a student, parent/carer or observer. Touching students, including well-intentioned informal and formal gestures such as putting a hand on the shoulder or arm, can lead to questions being raised. Employees must not make gratuitous physical contact with students and should avoid attributing “touching” to their teaching style or as a way of relating to students. It is crucial that in all circumstances, adults should only touch children in ways which are appropriate to their professional or agreed role and responsibilities.

There will be occasions when physical contact will be acceptable, for example:-

- a) Action to prevent harm or injury to the student or others

If it is necessary to prevent a student causing injury to him/her or to others, the use of minimum force and contact necessary to prevent harm or injury is acceptable and defensible. Such incidents must always be reported (see Reporting Incidents below).

Further guidance is available from the ***DfE Use of reasonable force –Advice for Headteachers, staff and governing bodies (July 2013)***

- b) Comforting a student in distress

There is no easy definition of what is acceptable since much will depend on the circumstances, the age of the student, the extent and cause of the distress and the alternative means of providing comfort. Employees will need to use their professional judgement and discretion in relation to these factors. In particular they should consider how others might perceive the action, even if no one else is present, and ensure that it does not develop into unnecessary contact. Particular care must be taken in instances that involve the same student over a period of time.

c) Unavoidable contact

This is a particularly sensitive issue in curriculum subjects which involve a degree of practical skills and activities or coaching. All teachers must be alert to the possibilities of misinterpreting any contact. To avoid such misunderstanding, all planned contact must be demonstrably unavoidable. It may be, for example, that alternative methods involving demonstrations of particular techniques by the teacher or a particularly competent student may be more appropriate than modifying a student's technique by physical contact. It will generally not be acceptable for physical contact to take place between adolescent students and teachers. In cases of doubt or uncertainty, further advice should be sought from the Child Protection Officer or the Principal or a member of the Senior Leadership Team.

There are occasions when physical contact may be questioned even if innocent in intention. Employees should therefore ensure that their actions recognise the possibility of misinterpretation and are open to the scrutiny of colleagues. Individual professional judgements will be required about the level of physical contact with individual children, which will take account of their age, circumstances and background.

d) Corporal Punishment

Any form of physical punishment is prohibited under disciplinary procedures and potentially actionable by law. This also applies to any form of physical response to misbehaviour. The exceptions are noted above.

4. Private meetings

Private meetings by their very nature, provide opportunities for students to make malicious allegations. All employees must therefore recognise this possibility and plan such meetings accordingly. It is advisable to avoid remote areas of the school and to ensure that wherever possible the door is left open or visual contact with others is maintained. Under no circumstances should meetings with individual students be arranged off the school premises without the prior approval of the Principal. This includes the transporting of individual children in private cars. Such meetings should in any event, be discouraged.

Where it is not possible to meet in the circumstances referred to above, another employee should be told of the meeting beforehand. Steps to prevent others entering a room by the use of "Meeting in Progress" are especially likely to be open to misinterpretation. In many cases it will be advisable for another student or adult to be present or in a position to minimise risk during the interview.

5. First aid

The existence of any life threatening or serious condition will determine the suitability and necessity of physical contact. In the absence of such justification, employees who administer first aid should ensure that wherever possible, other children or another adult can be present if there is any doubt over the possibility of any physical contact being misconstrued.

6. Comments and discussions with students

Employees must avoid comments to or about students which could be taken to have sexual overtones. It is equally unacceptable for employees to encourage debate and discussions between groups of students that could be interpreted as having sexual overtones and are not justified in the context of the teaching programme. Schemes of learning should highlight particular areas of risk and sensitivity. Specific guidance may be needed to assist newly qualified or other teachers who are new to this area of work.

Notwithstanding the advice given above, it is recognised that in order to discharge particular pastoral responsibilities, employees may from time to time need to engage in conversation with students which may cover sensitive matters. Employees must use their professional judgement to ensure that they are not drawn into areas inappropriate to their duties or their relationship with the students concerned. Employees must also use their discretion to ensure that, for example, any probing for details cannot be construed as unjustified intrusion. Teachers and support staff must ensure that where he/she suspects there are or may be Safeguarding concerns; they never give an assurance of confidentiality to a student. Employees must inform students that such concerns will be passed to the Child Protection Officer.

In responding to individual students' distress, employees will need to consider carefully whether they should offer advice, sympathy or counselling if a discussion enters a sensitive area or, alternatively, refer them to the school's Child Protection Officer who has specific expertise in these matters.

The use of sarcastic, demeaning or insensitive comments towards young people may also be regarded as a form of abuse which is potentially very damaging and should be avoided at all times.

7. Infatuations and crushes

These unfortunately do develop and can involve students and employees of both sexes on both a heterosexual and homosexual basis. They need to be handled sensitively. Careless and insensitive reactions have been known to provoke false accusations. It is therefore in the interest of all parties to avoid adding to the student's problems by encouraging the crush or making jokes about the situation. In such situations the advice of a senior colleague or the Child Protection Officer must be sought. Other employees have a part to play too, in alerting a colleague to the possibility of an infatuation in order that appropriate steps can be taken to minimise hurt and distress and the risk to the employee concerned. Newly qualified teachers and inexperienced staff must recognise their particular vulnerability to adolescent infatuation.

8. Out of school and after-school activities

Employees should take particular care when supervising students in the less formal atmosphere of a residential setting or after-school activity. The more relaxed relationships that may promote successful activities can be misinterpreted by young people. It is important to emphasise that the standards of professional conduct and behaviour expected of employees should be no different to that which applies within school. They should be aware of the particular care which should be taken with older, more mature students in these circumstances.

Employees must be aware of the required code of conduct for both employees and students. The overriding principle to be borne in mind is the *in loco parentis* responsibility, whereby the carers delegate their own authority to the teacher/responsible adult so far as is necessary for the child's welfare, and so far as is reasonable to maintain discipline both in the interests of the School and (above all) of the individual student.

9. Teaching materials

The use of books, DVDs and films of an explicit or sensitive nature, particularly in relation to language or sexual behaviour must be given careful consideration to ensure that its selection is not subsequently misinterpreted. There should always, therefore, be a clear link with the lesson objective and the teacher's scheme of learning.

10. Reporting incidents

Employees should report any concerns they may have following an incident he/she feels that his/her actions may have been misinterpreted. This report should be made to the Principal or a member of SLT as soon as possible after the incident and should include as an immediate action, the submission of a written note of the incident. The employee may also wish to seek advice from his/her professional association.

Whilst reporting of incidents is always advisable, it is particularly important to ensure that a formal written record is made if any form of restraint has been used against a student or whenever a student, parent/carer or third party has complained about an action or expressed an intention to complain.

11. Personal letters and on-line communication

It will rarely be appropriate for employees to write personal notes, letters or emails to individual students. If an employee believes it is necessary to write a personal note to a student, he/she should discuss the purpose and context with a senior colleague who should refer to the Principal or SLT link if they require further advice.

This advice is not intended to curtail the use of e-mail where it is used for the submission of work, advice over aspects of learning or other professional matters. However employees using e-mail in this context need to be aware of the less formal style that can characterise this form of communication and should ensure that responses do not convey an inappropriate tone. In particular, a friendly and chatty style committed to e-mail can easily be misconstrued by the recipient as the "conversation" is effectively private to just two individuals, with all that this implies.

Employees should keep passwords secure and ensure that no other person can gain access to their e-mail account for the purpose of maliciously sending messages which

appear to have been written by them. Both employees and students should only use the official School e-mail address. Since these services can be monitored, they provide a measure of protection for both parties. The School's **Acceptable Usage Policy** provides full details of the appropriate use of the School internet and e-mail services.

The increased availability of social networking sites, internet chat rooms and similar on-line forums also poses risks for children and employees. While they are popular amongst young people and may offer positive experiences, there is widespread concern about their potential abuse by paedophiles attempting to groom new victims. The school's advice is that employees should not use unregulated chat rooms for children and should be aware that it is impossible to determine the age of any participant in these environments. Managed services are available in which on-line discussions for educational purposes can be organised in a secure environment for bona-fide participants.

12. Mobile phones & web based technology

Please refer to the school's **Acceptable Usage Policy** document which offers further advice and guidance on the use of mobile phones, personal email accounts, social networking sites and web based technologies.

13. Conclusion

Many employees express regret at the need for a code such as this. However, its purpose is to promote the highest standards of care for young people and to protect employees and others from the potentially devastating consequences of false allegations. It is an unfortunate fact that society is less trusting and that, on occasions, cases have come to light, which have justified the increased level of mistrust. All employees are urged to consider how they can safeguard their own position in the light of this advice without giving up important personal principles of care and trust. Whenever doubt exists any teacher should seek the advice of the Principal or Child Protection Officer.

Employees must sign the attached to confirm their understanding of this Code of Conduct, the Do's and Don'ts and to ensure that they are familiar with the references mentioned.

14. References:

1. DfE Keeping children safe in education (September 2021).
2. Audenshaw School Safeguarding Policy
3. Audenshaw School Child Protection Policy
4. Audenshaw School Safer Recruitment Policy
5. Audenshaw School Acceptable Usage Policy
6. DfE Use of reasonable force – Advice for headteachers, staff and governing bodies (July 2013)

Appendix A

Checklist for Employees Working with Young People

DO's

1. Do maintain appropriate boundaries at all times when dealing with students.
2. Do ensure that relationships are appropriate to the age, gender and maturity of the students.
3. Do consider how your behaviour will be perceived by students, parents/carers and colleagues.
4. Do leave doors open (where possible) during private meetings with students.
5. Do maintain visual contact with others during private meetings with students or be accompanied by a third party.
6. Do ensure that probing for information about a sensitive subject can be justified i.e. pastoral/welfare responsibilities.
7. Do pass safeguarding concerns to the Child Protection Officer.
8. Do handle suspected infatuations or crushes sensitively and report to a member of the Senior Leadership Team.
9. Do alert a colleague if you suspect they are the subject of the crush or infatuation.
10. Do apply the standards of professional conduct whether on or off site.
11. Do report all incidents where you feel your behaviour could be misconstrued.
12. Do keep all passwords for e-enabled technology secure.
13. Do be vigilant when using social networking sites.
14. Do seek advice from SLT, Child Protection Officer or the Principal if you are concerned about any matter connected with the well-being of students, colleagues or yourself.

DON'Ts

1. Don't make ambivalent or ambiguous comments towards students.
2. Don't make gratuitous physical contact with students.
3. Don't make unnecessary comments or use language with students which have sexual overtones.

4. Don't make hurtful, sarcastic, demeaning or insensitive comments to or about a student.
5. Don't be afraid to take action when required to prevent harm or injury to students or others. Always report such incidents.
6. Don't react to misbehaviour with a physical response – this is potentially actionable by law. Physical Abuse can include, but is not restricted to:
 - a. *Grabbing, pushing, poking or slapping*
 - b. *Restraining a child in a chair or locking in a room*
 - c. *Punching or kicking*
 - d. *Throwing things at the child*
 - e. *Hitting a child with an object*
 - f. *Pulling hair or biting*
 - g. *Tripping up*
 - h. *Close up shouting and getting into personal space.*
7. Don't arrange private meetings with students off site.
8. Don't offer confidentiality to students where there are safeguarding suspicions or concerns.
9. Don't give students your personal contact details including email and mobile number.
10. Don't give students your facebook, twitter or any social media account details and do not accept any friend requests or engage in any conversation.

Appendix B

Declaration – Part A & Part B Code of Conduct Policy

I confirm that I have read and understood the attached Code of Conduct.

Name.....

Signature.....

Date.....